

LIFE AND TIMES
OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

HALL N. JACKSON

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June 15 1911.

John E. Burton Esq.
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I send you with my compliments a ~~canon~~
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all the advertisements in it. and
hope you will like it.

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HALL N. JACKSON.

BROCKETT

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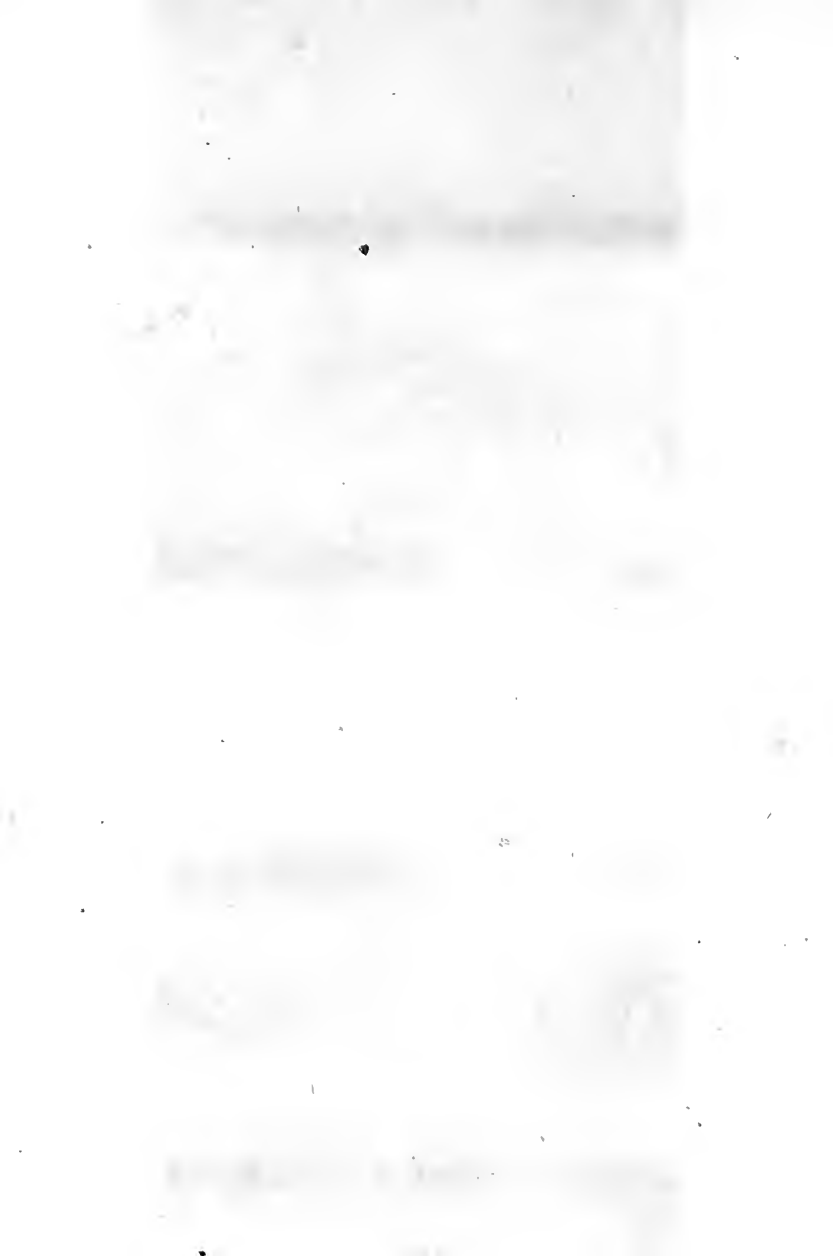
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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE
LIFE AND TIMES
OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
SIXTEENTH
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

INCLUDING HIS
SPEECHES, MESSAGES, INAUGURALS, PROCLAMATIONS, ETC., ETC.

BY
L. P. BROCKETT, M.D.
AUTHOR OF "OUR GREAT CAPTAINS," "HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR IN THE
UNITED STATES; PHILANTHROPIC RESULTS OF THE WAR," ETC., ETC.

JONES BROTHERS & CO., PUBLISHERS,
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J. O. Lindsey

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P R E F A C E.

"THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN!" and why, pray, add another to the many memoirs of him already published?

Because, dear reader, there was need of just *one* more. Listen, and we will prove it. The memoirs and biographies of our late President, which have already appeared, are, some of them, from able pens, and clearly and fairly accomplish the object for which they were written. Without exception, we believe, they belong to the class of campaign biographies; some written before his first, others during the canvass which preceded his second, election. Their principal object was, of course, political. They have not, we think, dealt in misrepresentation; there was no need of that. But they have presented him as a fit and proper candidate for the office of President of the United States, and for this purpose they have dwelt largely upon his previous political career in Congress; in the Senatorial canvass; in the closing portion of Mr. Buchanan's presidency; and some of them on the stupendous events of the four years of his first administration, and the policy he pursued during that long period of darkness and gloom. This is all right and admirable in its way, and were there any question of a campaign life of the *Good* President, were he still with us, and still a candidate for the highest honors a grateful people could bestow, we should say at once, "that which is written is sufficient; we can add nothing to a record so pure and honorable."

But this is not the time for a campaign life of Abraham

Lincoln. He whom he served with singleness of heart here, hath called him up higher, and henceforth his place is with the glorified, whose brows are illumined with the pure and holy light which proceeds from the throne of God.

We could not if we would, and we would not if we could, attempt a political life of him whose loss we, as well as the nation, most deeply mourn. We have no fondness for the devious track of party politics, no desire to pander to so groveling and base-born an ambition. But we have loved Abraham Lincoln as a child might love a father; we have confided in him, have trusted his sagacity, have honored his patriotism, have admired that sterling common sense which led him to judge so wisely, to act so honorably and justly, and to meet questions of such difficulty with such a wise and clear discrimination.

We desired to prepare this life of him, that we might exhibit him as he appeared and was, in all the relations of life, a man of the people, hardy, laborious, and self-reliant—a self-made man in the best sense of that title—studious, desirous ever to make up the deficiencies of education entailed by a frontier life, and of a rare teachable spirit; an honest, frank, *manly* man, one in whom his neighbors and friends could trust most implicitly; a pattern man in his fidelity to truth and principle and right. We have sought also to delineate him in his domestic and social relations, as a dutiful son, a kind and tender husband, a loving father, a genial and social friend, with a keen sense of humor, great conversational powers, and a fascinating way which, though his form was ungainly, won him the love of all who were thrown in his society. And it has been our aim also to depict him as he appeared in public life, a clear and lucid speaker, a skilful debater, who won the hearts of his audience to his own side, not by trick or subterfuge, but by his apt and effective way of “putting things;” clinching a point often by a telling illustration, which, however homely it might be, was never out of place; a statesman whose enlarged per-

ceptions and breadth of view took in all the bearings of the great questions which have agitated the public mind in the last five years; a man who, acting slowly, with calmness and great deliberation, never made a mistake in regard to a principle, and never indulged a thought of self, but always sought his country's good; a chief magistrate, who though reviled, reviled not again, but with an almost angelic patience, sought to do good to those who despitefully used him; a diplomatist who believed that truth, honesty and frankness were better weapons for managing the intricate questions of our foreign policy, than deceit, duplicity, and "paltering in a double sense." And if some "good angel will guide our pencil while we draw," we would portray him also, as the Christian, in public and private life, seeking counsel from above, and amid all his weighty cares and his wearying burdens, looking to God for guidance, and devoutly acknowledging his indebtedness to him for every blessing. Having thus shown his character as it was in life, we would also venture, though with eyes bedimmed with tears, to draw aside the veil, and describe how the demon slavery, possessing the heart and firing the brain of the wretched assassin, led him to commit a deed which shall consign him to eternal infamy; and how, all over our land, and throughout christendom, at the tidings of his death, a wail of anguish went up to heaven from millions of stricken hearts, who had recognized in him the second founder of the Republic, the Emancipator, the one historic name which shall go down to posterity, linked in our country's history, with that of Washington.

With such a purpose, we submit that there are ample reasons, as there is abundant room, for a new memoir of our martyred President ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE prominent feature of ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S life is the fact, that, from first to last, he was a truly representative Man of the People. In whatever position of private life or of public trust he was placed, whether in the frontier cabin, the modest law office at Springfield, the Halls of Legislation, or the Presidential chair at Washington, he always maintained the same truthful and noble character, winning the confidence of the people, and eliciting from all who came in contact with him a degree of personal affection and enthusiasm which has been given to no other American statesman of our day, unless it be to Henry Clay, whom he so highly respected, and, in no slight degree, resembled. The world, indeed, has seen many men, who, by the grace of their manners, the force of their intellect, or the splendor of their achievements, have obtained a strong hold upon the popular heart; yet the homage universally accorded to them was the result rather of a certain *fascination* than of sincere affection. France had her NAPOLEON, who rose from the people, and adroitly used that fact to subserve his personal ambition; yet he was

not *of* them, although he enjoyed their idolatry. Their national pride was gratified by the dazzling success of one, who, soaring from their own level, had proven himself equal in abilities to the proudest monarchs, the ablest generals, and the most finished statesmen of his time. But the calmer judgment of history, sifting the real from the unreal, will record that the Emperor loved his people, if love it can be called, from motives of self-interest.

Even our own illustrious WASHINGTON, the very Polar Star of American patriotism, honored with an ever increasing fame throughout both continents, represented, in his day, the higher intellectual and social phase of American society, rather than those humbler circles of thought and action in which the masses move and have their being. The influence of gentle blood, the advantages of education, wealth and position, which moulded his earlier life, conspired to make him the representative of the aristocratic class. And though the purity of his personal and public life, his unswerving patriotism, and the power of his well-balanced intellect, gained for him the sincerest affection of his countrymen, that affection ever was, and ever will be, mingled with a species of awe, which seemed to set him apart from ordinary mortals.

But LINCOLN, while living, and yet more truly since his death, holds a not inferior place in the hearts of his countrymen. It has been happily said of him, that "what Robert Burns has proverbially been to the people of his native land, and, to a certain extent, of all lands, as a bard, Abraham Lincoln seems to have become to us as a statesman and a patriot, by his intimate rela-

tions alike with the humbler and the higher walks of life." By the unstudied and truthful exercise of the native talents with which God endowed him, and under circumstances comparatively unfavorable, he was raised, apparently by the continued and universal suffrage of his fellow-citizens, from a place of humble obscurity to a position and a fame equalled only by that of Washington. And the secret of his success was simply this, that he never, for one moment in all his varied experiences, forgot that he was *of* the people; never, in a single instance, neglected their interests. The people, also, fully comprehended him. They remembered that his experiences, whether of gladness or of sorrow, had been the same as theirs; that the great principles of justice and humanity underlying their own happiness, rights and feelings, were deeply enshrined within his heart. They knew, too, that unstained by temptation and unswerved by success, he would always be, as he always had been, the champion and defender of their interests. His identity with the people was such, and such only, as common toils, experiences and emotions could have produced. And in that identity of interest, feeling and purpose, was his power—a power which, from the beginning of his career to the latest hour of his life, was never weakened by the blasts of partisan detraction, or by any demerit of his own.

In person, also, as in principle, he was a truly representative American. His gaunt and bony form, firmly knit by the labor of a frontier life, was, to the people, a constant reminder that his earlier years had been spent amid scenes and trials with which they were themselves familiar. His features were plain and homely, but they

were illumined by thoughtful eyes, tenderly described by one who knew him well, as "the *kindest* eyes that were ever placed in mortal head;" and the habitual sadness of his countenance revealed the man of strong emotions, of earnest purpose, of infinite depth of feeling. His language was always simple, clear and unequivocal; his style of argument familiar, logical, and generally pointed with a quaint illustration, an apt story, or an easy play of humor. His manner was such as might have been expected of the man, cordial, off-hand, yet having an innate refinement which placed others at their ease, and so harmonized and softened his angularities, as to invest with a certain dignity the harsher outlines of his tall and ungainly figure. He had, also, a straightforward way of handling subjects the most complicated and the most important; not with a self-conceited flippancy, but with a sort of every-day-affair ease and simplicity of treatment which seemed suddenly to divest them of all extraneous matters, and to leave them so clearly defined in all their relations, as to excite our surprise and admiration. Indeed, the rare art of "putting things," was possessed by this honest man in an eminent degree. The numerous perplexing questions which were constantly being developed by the progress of the war, were treated by this Illinois lawyer with a freedom and fearlessness which could only have proceeded from a conviction that *principles were always the same*, whatever might be the magnitude of the case in question.

In short, amid the herculean responsibilities of a four years' war, such, for extent and principles involved, as the world had never before seen; amid questions, civil,

military, and political; amid defeats and party clamor; amid a multitude of counsellors and varying counsels; amid the plottings of political generals and the blunders of incompetent commanders, "Honest Abe" was always "master of the position." Purity of intention, directness of purpose, patience and firmness, in every situation and in every emergency, ever marked his course of action. No public man, under the pressure of great responsibilities, adhered more strictly to Col. Crockett's well-known rule of "Be sure you're right, and then go ahead;" and those familiar phrases which were so often on his lips, "We must keep pegging away," and, "I have put my foot down," expressed the patient determination of a loyal but sorely tried heart. There was no Jacksonian swagger of "By the Eternal!" but there was an ever present sense of his accountability to God for his acts, and a practical reliance upon His arm of strength in all that he did, which peculiarly characterized President Lincoln. "Pray for me that I may receive the Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which, success is certain," were his words of farewell to the assembled friends and neighbors who bade him God speed when he left his Springfield home to enter upon the duties of the Presidential chair. And again, four years later, in his second inaugural speech, which now seems to us as one of his last utterances, he thus speaks to a great people, whose sorrows he had borne, and whose success was at hand: "*With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle,*

and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Such, then, was ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the natural outgrowth of free institutions. Indeed, such a character as his could not have been developed amid the deeply worn grooves and the limited influences of European society. It was as peculiarly American in all its features, as are our great mountains, prairies and water-courses; natural in growth, untrammelled in action, easy of adaptation to every varying circumstance of life, fearless in its courage, persistent in its purpose. If there is any truth in the theory that the mental characteristics of men are fashioned by the scenery amidst which they are reared, then must his life and character be taken as typical of our American genius and institutions.

It was this man, so true, so self-poised, so honest—to whom, amid all his weighty responsibilities, no fault is imputed, except that of *too much kindness*—whose life we now purpose to write.

CHAPTER I.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BOYHOOD IN KENTUCKY.

His Ancestry.—Their Residence in Pennsylvania and Virginia.—His Grandfather moves over into Kentucky.—Is killed by an Indian.—His Widow settles in Washington County.—His son, Thomas Lincoln, marries and locates near Hodgenville.—Birth of Abraham Lincoln.—La Rue County.—His Early Life and Training in Kentucky.—Removal of the Family to Indiana.

THE ancestors of Abraham Lincoln were English, and of Quaker stock,—although the characteristic traits of that sect seem gradually to have disappeared under the stern discipline of the frontier life which fell to the lot of the earlier generations in this new country. We first find definite traces of them in Berks county, Pennsylvania, although it, probably, was not the place of their original settlement in America; and they may have been a branch of the family that settled, at an earlier date, in the Old Plymouth Colony. Indeed, tradition affirms that the Pennsylvania branch was transplanted from Hingham, Mass., and was derived from a common stock with Col. Benjamin Lincoln, of Revolutionary fame. There is, at least, a noticeable coincidence in the general prevalence among each American branch of Scriptural names—the Benjamin, Levi, and Ezra of the Massachusetts family, having their counterpart in the Abraham, Thomas and Josiah of the Virginia and Kentucky race—a peculiarity to have been equally expected among sober Quakers and zealous Puritans.

“Old Berks,” first settled in 1734, was not long the home of the Lincoln family, who seem to have emigrated before its organization as a county, in 1752, to what is now known as Rockingham county, Virginia.

Rockingham, now esteemed one of the most productive counties of the State of Virginia, was at that remote period in the very heart of the wilderness; a section, which, intersected by the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah, invited, by its natural resources, the advances of that civilization that even then looked hopefully forward toward the setting sun. And a branch of the family, it is said, yet remains there, enjoying the benefits of the land which their ancestors selected and reclaimed with sturdy toil from its original wildness.

The Lincolns, however, were evidently of the stern old pioneer stock, which God seems to send into the world to break a way for the advance of a superior civilization; men who naturally court the adventure, the danger and the hardship of a frontier life, and who, having wrested a home from the wild elements of nature, straightway lose the desire of possession, and willingly relinquish all which they have gained for the sake of new excitements.

Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of our subject, was of this class—a frontiersman, in the truest sense, whose rough but healthful life had been spent in felling the woods, in clearing the land which formed his homestead in the Shenandoah Valley—that valley since rendered so memorable in the war which his grandson has conducted in behalf of the Union and Universal Liberty—in hunting the abundant game, and in the hazards of an un-

certain war with lurking savages. It is not surprising, then, that, to a man of such training and disposition, the glowing descriptions which, from about 1769 to 1780, began to spread throughout the older settlements concerning the incredible richness and beauty of the then recently-explored Kentucky Valley, should have possessed an irresistible charm! Perhaps, also, the settlements around him had already begun to be too far advanced for the highest enjoyment of his characteristic mode of life; for such men, when they begin to hear the axes of neighbors echoing around them, and from their cabin-doors can see the blue smoke curling upwards from other chimnies than their own, are apt to feel the need of "more elbow-room," and to take up their line of march for "solitudes more profound."

We must, also, in this case, take into consideration the fact that the first explorer of this Kentucky paradise, Daniel Boone, whose very name suggests a whole world of romantic adventure, was a neighbor of the Lincolns—having removed, when quite a lad, among the earlier emigrants from Eastern Pennsylvania to Berks county. Here he must have been a contemporary resident, and perhaps an acquaintance, in those familiar times when every one knew every one else in the same county. At all events, the Berks county people watched with eager interest and sympathy the adventurous career of Boone; and his achievements undoubtedly suggested new attractions to the more active and daring spirits among his boyhood companions, whose ideal of manhood he so nearly approached.

At this date, and for ten or twelve years later, the present State of Kentucky formed a part of the old

commonwealth of Virginia, and was a common territory and place of meeting for the Indian tribes both of the north and south. This "dark and bloody ground," as it has been most appropriately called, was already famous as the scene of many exciting adventures and deadly conflicts between the white man and the red-skin; and Boone, Harrod, Floyd, and other brave spirits were still in the midst of the great struggles which have imperishably associated their names with the history of the country. Thitherward, from the borders of the surrounding Colonies, from every direction, and from hundreds of miles distance, the tide of emigration had now begun. The emigrants were from that hardy class of frontiersmen most inured to the toils which awaited them in the new Kentucky forests; and they pressed forward fearless of the dangers which surrounded their pathway. Among them was Abraham Lincoln, who, about 1780, established a home for his small family somewhere on Floyd's creek, and probably near its mouth, in what is now Bullitt county. Here, amid incredible hardships and dangers, the relation of which seem to us, in these days, like the mutterings of a far-off troubled dream, he erected his rude dwelling and made a beginning in his new pioneer labors. But, the hopes which led to this change of his home were destined never to be fulfilled. His cabin, isolated from its neighbors by a distance of several miles, was a dangerous dwelling in a region infested by roving savages, whose blind instinct of revenge was perpetually searching for a pale-face victim on whom to sate its fury. And, while at work, one day, at a distance from his home, the skulking Indian crept upon him unawares, and his scalped

and lifeless body was found by his family on the following morning. This took place in the year 1784, or very near that time, when he was probably not more than thirty-five years of age. His suddenly-bereaved widow, with three sons and two daughters left to her protection and care, and with but slender means for their support, soon removed to Washington county, in the same State, where she reared her children, all of whom reached mature age. The daughters, in due time, were married, and the three sons, Thomas, Mordecai, and Josiah, all remained in Kentucky until after they attained their majority.

Thomas Lincoln, one of these sons, and the parent of the illustrious President, was born in 1778, and was but six years old at the time of his father's untimely death. Of his early life, we have no knowledge except what we may learn by inference from the general lot of his class, and of the habits and modes of living then prevalent among the hardy pioneers of Kentucky. These backwoodsmen had an unceasing round of toil, with no immediate reward but a bare subsistence, from year to year, and the cheering promise of "better days in store." And, although more comfortable days, and a much improved condition of things, had come before Thomas Lincoln arrived at maturity, yet his boyhood must have had a full share of the trials and penury incident to the lot of the first generation of Kentuckians, with few other enjoyments than the occasional "shooting match" or "wedding frolic." He belonged to the generation which was cotemporary with the independent existence of the nation, and which largely partook of the exultant spirit of self-confidence then prevalent

throughout the land. And, as he grew to manhood, the currents of emigration into the State had enlarged and accelerated, until, in 1800, when he had attained the age of twenty-two, its population numbered two hundred and twenty thousand, and the wilderness began to blossom as the rose. Rapid, however as was this growth, there still was ample unoccupied space within the limits of the new State for those whose free spirit rejoiced in the "trackless woods," and craved the excitement and the loneliness of a home in the wilderness.

In 1806, Thomas Lincoln, being then twenty-eight years of age, was married to Nancy Hanks, a native of Virginia—of his own station in life—and, as there is reason to believe, possessed of rare qualities of mind and heart; but dying at an early age, and having, from the time of her marriage, passed her days upon the obscure frontiers, few recollections of her are now accessible.

The young couple were plain people, members of the Baptist church, and about equally educated. The wife could read, but not write; while her husband could manage his own name as a penman, but, it is said, in a style more perplexing than readable. Nevertheless, he could fully appreciate the value of a better education than he himself possessed, and was not devoid of that truly democratic reverence which can bow before superior mental attainments in others. He was, besides, an industrious, cheerful, kind-hearted man. His wife was a woman of excellent judgment, sound sense, and proverbial piety; an excellent helpmeet for a backwoodsman of Thomas Lincoln's stamp, and a mother whose

piety and affection must have been of inestimable value in the shaping and directing of her children's destinies.

Abraham Lincoln was born of these parents on the 12th day of February, 1809. The place where they at this time resided, is in what is now La Rue county, about a mile and a half from Hodgenville, the county seat, and seven miles from Elizabethtown, laid off several years previously, and the county seat of Hardin county. One sister, two years his senior, who grew up to womanhood, married, and died while young; and a brother, two years younger than himself, who died in early childhood, and whose now unmarked grave, Mr. Lincoln remembers to have visited along with his mother before leaving Kentucky, were the only children of Thomas Lincoln, either by this or by a subsequent marriage. ABRAHAM has thus, for a long time, been the sole immediate representative of this hardy and energetic race.

La Rue county, so named from an early settler, John La Rue, was set off and separately organized in 1843, the portion containing Mr. Lincoln's birthplace having been, up to that date, included in Hardin county. It is a rich grazing country in its more rolling or hilly parts, and the level surface produces good crops of corn and tobacco. Hodgenville, near which Mr. Lincoln was born, is a pleasantly situated town on Nolin creek, and a place of considerable business. About a mile above this town, on the creek, is a mound, or knoll, thirty feet above the banks of the stream, containing two acres of level ground, at the top of which there is now a house. Some of the early pioneers encamped on this knoll; and but a short distance from it, a fort was

erected by Philip Phillips, an emigrant from Pennsylvania, about 1780 or 1781, near the time Mr. Lincoln's ancestor arrived from Virginia. John La Rue came from the latter State, with a company of emigrants, who settled about the same time, at Phillips' Fort. Robert Hodgen, La Rue's brother-in-law, purchased and occupied the land on which Hodgenville is built. Both of these pioneers were men of sterling integrity, high moral worth, and consistent and zealous members of the Baptist church; and one of their associates, Benjamin Lynn, was a minister of the same persuasion. Such were the influences under which, more than twenty years before Thomas Lincoln settled there, this little colony had been founded, and which went far to give the community its permanent character.

It is needless to rehearse the kind of life in which Abraham Lincoln was here trained. The picture is similar in all such settlements. In his case, there was indeed the advantage of a generation or two of progress, since his grandfather had hazarded and lost his life in the then slightly broken wilderness. The State now numbered about four hundred thousand inhabitants, and had all the benefits of an efficient local administration, the want of which had greatly increased the dangers and difficulties of the first settlers. Henry Clay, it may here be appropriately mentioned, had already, though little more than thirty years of age, begun his brilliant political career, having then served for a year or two in the United States Senate.

Yet, with all these changes, the humble laborers, settled near "Hodgen's Mills," on Nolin creek, had no other lot but incessant toil, and a constant struggle

with nature in the still imperfectly reclaimed wilds, for a plain subsistence. Here the boy spent the first years of his childhood. Before the date of his earliest distinct recollections, however, he removed with his father to a place six miles distant from Hodgenville, which was ere long surrendered, as we shall presently see, for a home in the far-off wilderness, and for frontier life, in its fullest and most significant meaning.

Abraham Lincoln's Kentucky life, then, extended only through a period of about seven years, terminating with the autumn of 1816. And if, as has been asserted by some philosophic minds, the experiences and instructions of the first seven years of every person's existence, do more to mould and determine his subsequent general character, then we must regard Mr. Lincoln as a Kentuckian (of the generation next succeeding that of Clay), by his early impressions and discipline, no less than by birth.

These were the days, it must be remembered, when common schools were unknown. Yet education was not undervalued or neglected among these rude foresters; nor did young Lincoln, limited as were his opportunities, grow up an illiterate boy. Itinerant, but competent teachers were accustomed to offer their services, and opened private schools in the new settlements, being supported by tuition fees, or a subscription.

During his boyhood in Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln attended at different times at least two schools of this description, of which he had clear recollections. One of these was kept by Zachariah Riney, who although himself an ardent Roman Catholic, made no proselyting efforts in his school, and when any little religious cere-

monies, perhaps mere catechising and the like, were to be gone through with, all the Protestant children, of whom, it is needless to say that young "Abe" was one, were allowed to retire. Riney was probably in some way connected with the movements of the "Trappists," who came to Kentucky in the autumn of 1805, and founded an establishment (afterward abandoned) on Pottinger's creek. They were active in promoting education, especially among the poorer classes, and had a school for boys under their immediate supervision. This, however, had been abandoned before the date of Lincoln's first school-days, and it is not improbable that the private schools under Catholic teachers were an offshoot of the original system adopted by the Trappists, who subsequently removed to Illinois.

Another teacher, on whose instruction the boy afterward attended, while living in Kentucky, was named Caleb Hazel. His was also a neighborhood school, sustained by private patronage.

With the aid of these two schools, and such assistance as he received from his parents at home, he had become able to read well, though without having made any great literary progress, at the age of seven. That he was neither a dull or inapt scholar, is manifest from his subsequent attainments. With the allurements of the rifle and the wild game which abounded in the country, however, and with his meagre advantages in regard to books, it is probable that his perceptive faculties and muscular powers were more fully developed than his scholastic talents.

It is worthy of remark, also, that while he lived in Kentucky, he never saw even the exterior of what was

properly a church edifice; and the few religious services which he had an opportunity to attend, were held either in humble private dwellings, or in some log school-house.

Another change of home, however, awaited our young hero. His father, perhaps from the old restless spirit of adventure, but more probably because he found life in a slave State a most unsatisfactory one for himself, and presenting only the prospect of a hopeless struggle in the future for his children, determined upon removal to the wilds of Indiana, where free labor would have no competition with slave labor, and the poor white man might reasonably hope that, in time, his children could take an honorable position, won by industry and careful economy.

So, having sold his Kentucky farm, as the story goes, for ten barrels of whiskey (forty gallons each) valued at two hundred and eighty dollars, besides twenty dollars in money,* and having made a trial trip to Indiana to select a location to his liking, which he found in what is now Spencer county, he made his preparations to remove his family to their new home.

* Although this story has been discredited by some, yet as such transactions in the disposal of real estate were not uncommon at that period, we see no reason to doubt it, nor to consider it as prejudicial to Thomas Lincoln's character; for it must be remembered that those days were *not* the days of temperance and "Total Abstinence."

CHAPTER II.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S THIRTEEN YEARS IN INDIANA.

Removal of the Lincoln Family to Spencer county, Indiana.—Abraham as a Farm Boy.—As a Marksman.—The Death of his Mother.—The second Marriage of his Father.—Abraham's Education.—His own Account, when President, of his Education.—His Love of Books.—The Story of the Damaged Book.—His Voyage to New Orleans as a Flatboatman.—Description of Early Times and Scenes in Indiana.

EARLY in the autumn of 1816, the Lincoln family, bidding adieu to their old Kentucky home, commenced a long and wearisome journey toward the forests of southern Indiana. The plain wagon, with its simple covering, contained the "household goods," and sheltered the wife and daughter, while the father and his son, who was now in his ninth year, walked beside the horse which steadily drew the family conveyance, or took care that the indispensable cow kept pace to the music of the jolting wheels. Arriving at the proper landing on the banks of the Ohio, the little caravan was embarked upon a flatboat, and floated across the stream, now swelled to fair proportions by the autumn rains. Finally reaching the Indiana side, the adventurers landed at or near the mouth of Anderson's creek, now the boundary between the counties of Perry and Spencer, about one hundred and forty miles below Louisville, by the river, and sixty above Evansville. In a direct line across the country from their former residence, the

distance is perhaps hardly one hundred miles, yet the journey had occupied them a whole week.

The place where Mr. Lincoln settled at the end of his journey, was near the present town of Gentryville, some distance back from the Ohio river, and was, under the earliest organization, in Perry county. Two years later, however, Spencer county was formed, embracing all that part of Perry west of Anderson's creek, and including the place of Mr. Lincoln's location.

Here, then, his emigrant wagon paused; and soon, with the help of his youthful son, a log cabin was built, which was to be their rough but comfortable home for many coming years.

This done, and a shelter provided for their cattle, the next work was to clear an opening in the forest, upon which to raise a crop of grain for their sustenance during the next season. Hard work had now begun in good earnest for the young Kentuckian, and the realities of genuine pioneer life were to be brought home to his comprehension in a very practical manner.

Indiana, at this date, was still a Territory, having been originally united under the same government with Illinois, after the admission of Ohio as a State, "the first-born of the great Northwest," in 1802. A separate territorial organization was made for each in 1809. In June, 1816, pursuant to a Congressional "enabling act," a Convention had been held which adopted a State Constitution, preparatory to admission into the Union, and under this Constitution, a month or two after Thomas Lincoln's arrival, in December, 1816, Indiana became, by act of Congress, a sovereign State. Its population, at this time, was about sixty-five thousand, distributed

chiefly south of a straight line drawn from Vincennes, on the Wabash, to Lawrenceburg, on the Ohio.

“The next thirteen years Abraham Lincoln spent here, in southern Indiana, near the Ohio, nearly midway between Louisville and Evansville. He was now old enough to begin to take an active part in the farm labors of his father, and he manfully performed his share of hard work. He learned to use the axe and to hold the plow. He became inured to all the duties of seed-time and harvest. On many a day, during every one of those thirteen years, this Kentucky boy might have been seen, with a long ‘gad’ in his hand, driving his father’s team in the field, or from the woods with a heavy draught, or on the rough path to the mill, the store, or the river landing; very probably at times, in the language of the Hoosier bard, descriptive of such pioneer workers in general :

“ ‘———*sans* shoes or socks on,
With snake-pole and a yoke of oxen.’

“A vigorous constitution, and a cheerful, unrepining disposition, made all his labors comparatively light. To such a one, this sort of life has in it much of pleasant excitement to compensate for its hardships. He learned to derive enjoyment from the severest lot. The ‘dignity of labor,’ which is with demagogues such hollow cant, became to him a true and appreciable reality.” Thus, by hardy out-door labor and exercise he laid the foundation of that iron constitution which proved such a blessing throughout his whole life, enabling him to endure fatigue and care to which an ordinary frame would have succumbed.

About this time, also, he took a start as a hunter, which was never much improved afterward. One day, toward the close of his eighth year, while his father happened to be absent, a flock of wild turkeys approached the cabin, and Abraham, standing inside, took aim with a rifle through a crevice of the log-house, and succeeded in killing one of the fowls. This was his first shot at living game, and, according to his own account, he has never since pulled a trigger on larger; but we can imagine, and participate in, the pride with which he exhibited his trophy to his delighted parents.

In the autumn of 1818, Abraham had the misfortune to lose his excellent mother. She was a truly noble woman, as her son's life attested. From her came that deep and abiding reverence for holy things—that profound trust in Providence and faith in the triumph of truth—and that gentleness and amiability of temper which, in the lofty station of Chief Magistrate, he displayed so strikingly during years of most appalling responsibility. From her he derived the spirit of humor and the desire to see others happy, which afterward formed so prominent a trait in his character. Though uneducated in books, she was wise in the wisdom of experience and truth, and was to her son a faithful mentor as well as a good mother. He never ceased to mourn her loss, and ever cherished her memory with the tenderest affection and respect. A year after her death, his father married Mrs. Sally Johnson, at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, a widow, with three children by her first marriage. She proved a good and kind mother to Abraham, and has lived to see him occupying the chief position in the land, and in the hearts of his

countrymen. There were no children by this second marriage.

Here, during his residence in Evansville, Mr. Lincoln's education may properly be said to have commenced. It is true that the schools of his neighborhood were of the same class, and little better than those in Kentucky, yet, aided by what he had already acquired, he managed to increase his slender stock of learning. His teachers, while here, were Andrew Crawford, — Sweeney, and Azel W. Dorsey, the latter of whom has lived to see his whilom pupil a giant leader among the people.

Abraham had achieved the art of reading before his own mother's death; and, subsequently, by the assistance of a young man of the neighborhood, had learned to write, an accomplishment which some of the friendly neighbors thought unnecessary, but his father quietly persisted, and the boy was set down as a prodigy when he wrote to an old friend of his mother's, a travelling preacher, and begged him to come and preach a sermon over his mother's grave. Three months after, Parson Elkins came, and friends assembled, a year after her death, to pay a last tribute of respect to one universally beloved and respected. Her son's share in securing the presence of the clergyman was not unmentioned, and Abraham soon found himself called upon to write letters for his neighbors.

So, when Mr. Crawford came into the vicinity, and at the solicitation of the people of the settlement, opened a school in his own cabin, Abraham's father embraced the opportunity to send him, in order that he might add some knowledge of arithmetic to his reading and writing. With buckskin clothes, a raccoon skin cap, and an old

arithmetic which had been somewhere found for him, he commenced his studies in the "higher branches." His progress was rapid, and his perseverance and faithfulness won the interest and esteem of his teacher.

Probably the most interesting period in the biography of a great man—be he student, statesman or soldier—is when the desire of honor first touches his heart-strings, and when the first little "sip" at the fountain of knowledge, has developed a thirst which would drink deeply and forever. For it is at this critical moment—that of the charming, yet dangerous first draught—that we seem to behold the germ, the incipient dawn, as it were, of those after-deeds which are to shed lustre upon the man's life, and upon the world in which he lives and acts. Our curiosity is awakened to learn what were his first loves in the way of books, human characters, and the visible objects of the natural universe. For knowing these, it is a pleasure to look back upon and compare them with our own experiences, or with the similar characteristics of those who have been numbered among the world's great men.

In spite, however, of his father's care to give him every facility for the acquirement of an education which was within his reach, as well as of his own assiduity and thirst for knowledge, little Abraham's opportunities must have been extremely limited, for he was accustomed to say, in after life, that he thought the aggregate of all his schooling did not amount to one year. He was never in a college or academy as a student, and never inside a college or academy till since he had a law-license; and what he had in the way of education, was picked up in his own way. After he was twenty-three,

and had separated from his father, he studied English grammar, imperfectly, of course, but so as to speak and write as well as he did. He studied, and nearly mastered, the six books of Euclid after he arrived at manhood.

In this connection we may be permitted to quote the following interesting narrative concerning Mr. Lincoln's education and early experiences, as elicited from him by the Rev. J. P. Gulliver, during a lengthy personal interview. It is especially valuable as throwing more light upon the President's peculiar mental constitution than we have found elsewhere:—

“I want very much to know, Mr. Lincoln, how you got this unusual power of “putting things.” It must have been a matter of education. No man has it by nature alone. What has your education been?”

“Well, as to education, the newspapers are correct—I never went to school more than twelve months in my life. But, as you say, this must be a product of culture in *some* form. I have been putting the question you ask me, to myself, while you have been talking. I can say this, that among my earliest recollections, I remember how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at any thing else in my life. But that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since. I can remember going to my little bed-room, after hearing the neighbors talk, of an evening, with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings. I could not sleep, though I often tried to, when I got on such a hunt after an idea, until I had caught it; and when I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over, until I had put it in

language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has since stuck by me, for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it north and bounded it south, and bounded it east and bounded it west. Perhaps that accounts for the characteristic you observe in my speeches, though I never put the things together before.'

"'Mr. Lincoln, I thank you for this. It is the most splendid educational fact I ever happened upon. This is *genius*, with all its impulsive, inspiring, dominating power over the mind of its possessor, developed by education into *talent*, with its uniformity, its permanence, and its disciplined strength, always ready, always available, never capricious—the highest possession of the human intellect. But let me ask, did you not have a law education? How did you prepare for your profession?'

"'Oh, yes. I "read law," as the phrase is; that is, I became a lawyer's clerk in Springfield, and copied tedious documents, and picked up what I could of law in the intervals of other work. But your question reminds me of a bit of education I had, which I am bound in honesty to mention. In the course of my law-reading, I constantly came upon the word *demonstrate*. I thought, at first, that I understood its meaning, but soon became satisfied that I did not. I said to myself, "what do I do when I *demonstrate*, more than when I *reason* or *prove*? How does *demonstration* differ from any other proof? I consulted Webster's Dictionary. That told of "certain proof," "proof beyond the possibility of doubt;" but I could form no idea what sort of proof that was. I thought a great many things were proved beyond a possibility of doubt, without recourse to any such extraordinary process of reasoning as I understood "demonstration" to be. I consulted all the dictionaries and books of reference I could find, but with no better results. You might as well have defined *blue* to a blind man. At last I said, "Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer if you do not understand what *demonstrate* means," and I left my

situation in Springfield, went home to my father's house, and stayed there till I could give any propositions in the six books of Euclid at sight. I then found out what "demonstrate" means, and went back to my law studies.'

"I could not refrain from saying, in my admiration of such a development of character and genius combined, 'Mr. Lincoln, your success is no longer a marvel. It is the legitimate result of adequate causes. You deserve it all, and a great deal more. If you will permit me I would like to use this fact publicly. It will be most valuable in inciting our young men to that patient classical and mathematical culture which most minds absolutely require. No man can talk well unless he is able, first of all, to define to himself what he is talking about. Euclid, well studied, would free the world of half its calamities, by banishing half the nonsense which now deludes and curses it. I have often thought that Euclid would be one of the best books to put on the catalogue of the Tract Society, if they could only get people to read it. It would be a means of grace.'

"'I think so,' said he, laughing; 'I vote for Euclid.'"

Books of course, were his great delight, and the procuring of a sufficient number of them to employ his mind, one of his principal anxieties. In this his father did much to aid him, and whenever he heard of any particular volume which he thought desirable, or for which Abraham asked, he always endeavored to obtain it for the use of his son. His teacher, Mr. Crawford, also frequently loaned him books which he could not otherwise have procured.

In this way he became acquainted with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Æsop's Fables*,* a *Life of Henry*

* May we not presume this selection to be an indication of that love for anecdote which has made our Chief Magistrate so distinguished as a relater of pithy stories.

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PROSPECTUS

FOR

PUBLISHING BY SUBSCRIPTION

THE

LIFE, TIMES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

Sixteenth President of the United States.

BY DR. L. P. BROCKETT,

Author of "Our Great Captains," "History of the Civil War in the United States," "Philanthropic Results of the War," &c., &c.

CHARACTER AND CONTENTS OF THE WORK.

thrilling in its close, is demanded by the public. It is to meet this desire, now so generally acknowledged, that the publishers have decided to send forth the present volume. True, there have been other biographies written, many of them of excellent character, but these we believe were all intended for party use in the last two presidential campaigns. Their object was, of course, political; consequently, they have dwelt principally upon his public life; upon his previous political career in Congress; in the Senatorial canvass; in the closing portion of Mr. Buchanan's presidency; and some of them on the stupendous events of the four years of his first administration, and the policy he pursued during that long period of darkness and gloom. This is all right and admirable in its way, and were there any question of a campaign life of the *Good* President, were he still with us, and still a candidate for the highest honors a grateful people could bestow, we should say at once, "that which is written is sufficient;" we can add nothing to a record so pure and honorable.

But all this has passed. Abraham Lincoln belongs no more to any party or section of this country. In his blood he has wiped out all hostilities, cemented all differences. Henceforth, equal with our own loved Washington, he reigns in the hearts of the people. As a representative American, as a natural outgrowth of our republican institutions, and as a pure, true, christian man, this book would present our great chieftain to the public.

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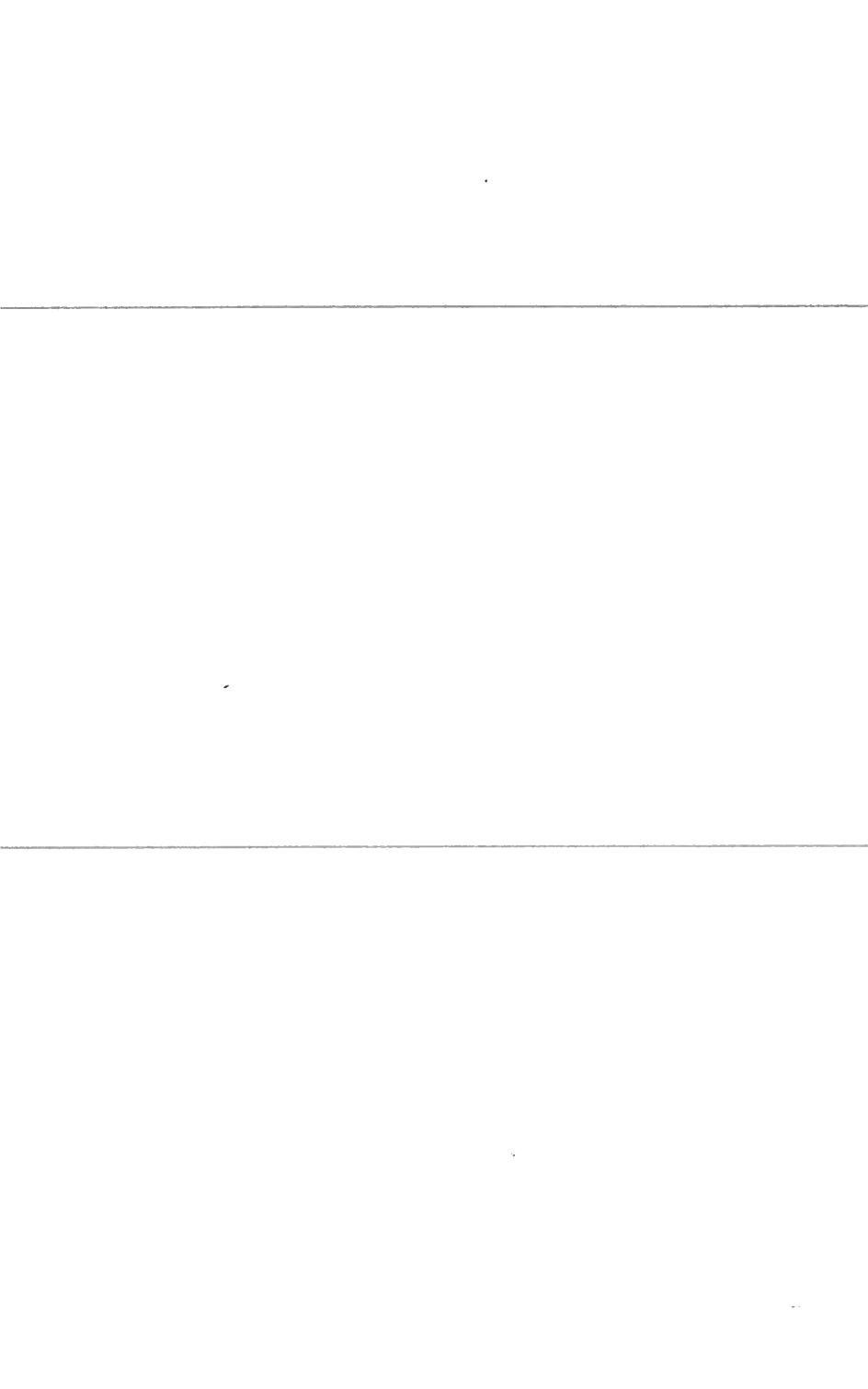
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